

John Boehner  
Chairman  
8th District, Ohio

*House Meets at 2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

- H.R. 2232—Radio Free Asia Act**  
**H.R. 1129—Microcredit for Self-Reliance Act**  
**H.Con.Res. 22—Expressing the Sense of the House Regarding Discrimination By the German Government Against Members of Minority Religious Groups**  
**S. 714—Extending Expiring VA Authorities**  
**S. 1139—Small Business Reauthorization Act**  
**H.R. 1377—Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act**  
**H.R. 2920—Amending the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act**  
**H.Con.Res. 139—Sense of Congress Regarding U.S. Participation in EXPO 2000, in Hannover, Germany**  
**H.Res. 245—Supporting a Free and Fair Referendum on Self-Determination for the People of Western Sahara**  
**H.Con.Res. 156—Condemning Continued Deterioration of Human Rights In Afghanistan**  
**H.R. 1805—Auburn Indian Restoration Act**  
**H.R. 2402—Water-Related Technical Corrections Act**  
**H.R. 2283—Arches National Park Expansion Act**  
**S. 669—Acquiring the Plains Railroad Depot at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site**  
**H.R. 112—Stanislaus County Land Conveyance**  
**S. 1231—United States Fire Administration Authorization Act**  
**H.R. 1502—Designating the James L. Foreman Federal Courthouse**  
**H.R. 2626—Clarifications to the Pilot Records Improvement Act**  
**H.R. 2834—City of Cleveland Land Conveyance**  
**H.R. 849—Prohibiting Illegal Aliens from Receiving Relocation Assistance**

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**H.R. 2476—Foreign Airlines Family Assistance Act**  
**H.R. 2621—Reciprocal Trade Agreement Authorities Act**  
**H.R. 2267—Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Appropriations Act**  
**(Conference Report)**  
**H.R. 2607—District of Columbia Appropriations Act (Conference Report)**  
**H.R. 2159—Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (Conference Report)**



**H.R. 2232—Radio Free Asia Act**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider H.R. 2232 as its first order of business today. Last Tuesday, the Rules Committee granted a closed rule providing for one hour of general debate, divided equally between the chairman and ranking member of the International Relations Committee. It allows one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

**Summary:** H.R. 2232 authorizes increased funding for Radio Free Asia and Voice of America broadcasting into China. The bill also states that no later than 90 days after enactment, the president, in consultation with the Board of Broadcasting Governors, must report to Congress on a plan to achieve continuous broadcasting to China in multiple dialects and languages. Radio Free Asia (RFA) currently broadcasts five hours a day in the Mandarin dialect and two hours a day in Tibetan, while the Voice of America (VOA) broadcasts 10 hours in Mandarin and three-and-a-half hours in Tibetan daily. An amendment to the State Department authorization bill authorized \$20 million in additional funding for the RFA and \$10 million for the VOA, along with \$10 million for the Broadcasting Board of Governors to finish construction of a transmitter on Tinian island. CBO estimates that enactment will increase discretionary spending by \$32 million in 1998 and \$81 million over the 1998-2002 period. The bill was introduced by Mr. Royce et al. and was reported by the International Relations Committee by voice vote on September 30, 1997.

**Views:** The Republican leadership supports passage of the measure. An official Clinton Administration viewpoint was unavailable at press time.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #31, October 31, 1997.



**Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider the following four bills under suspension of the rules after it completes consideration of H.R. 2232. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

**H.R. 1129—Microcredit for Self-Reliance Act** authorizes the president, through nongovernmental organizations and credit institutions, to provide assistance for microenterprises in developing

countries. Among other things, the bill directs the administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) to maximize assistance to microenterprises by establishing a monitoring system that sets certain performance goals. It authorizes appropriations for the U.S. contribution to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which provides grants to nongovernmental organizations and other private community-based microenterprise institutions serving the poor, especially women. The bill stipulates that the administrator of AID should provide approximately one-half of the credit assistance authority for poverty lending programs which offer loans of \$300 or less to such poor members of society.

The bill also expresses the sense of the Congress that: (1) the Microstart Program established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) represents an important new initiative; and (2) the president should instruct the U.S. representative to the United Nations to use the U.S. vote to support the program. CBO estimates that spending for these purposes would continue under the bill at about the same level which the administration is currently spending (\$120 million), assuming appropriation of the necessary funds. The bill does not affect direct spending, and pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. The measure was introduced by Mr. Houghton et al. on March 19, 1997. The International Relations committee ordered the bill reported by voice vote on October 9.

**H.Con.Res. 22—Expressing the Sense of the House Regarding Discrimination By the German Government Against Members of Minority Religious Groups** calls upon the president to (1) assert U.S. concern regarding violations by the German government of the rights of members of minority religious groups (including Scientologists); (2) emphasize that the United States regards human rights practices of the German government, and in particular the treatment of U.S. citizens who are performing, doing business, or traveling in Germany, as a significant factor in enhancing the good faith relations between the United States and Germany; (3) encourage the governments of other countries to appeal to the German government and to cooperate with other governments and international organizations (including the United Nations and its agencies) in efforts to protect the rights of minority religious groups in Germany; (4) continue to document discrimination against religious minority groups by the German government and German federal and state officials in his annual reports to the Congress on human rights practices in Germany; and (5) report to Congress on executive branch efforts to discourage discrimination against minority religious groups in that country. The bill was introduced by Mr. Payne et al. on February 13, 1997. The International Relations committee ordered the resolution reported by voice vote on October 31.

**S. 714—Extending Expiring VA Authorities** extends, consolidates, and strengthens several expiring laws which authorize programs to assist and rehabilitate homeless veterans and veterans with chronic mental illnesses. In addition, the bill reauthorizes a pilot program that allows the Veterans Affairs Secretary to make direct housing loans to Native American veterans through December 31, 2003 (the program's existing authorization expired on September 30, 1997). The bill also extends the authority of the VA to enter into enhanced-use leases until December 31, 1999 (currently set to expire on December 31, 1997). The VA's enhanced-use lease authority permits the VA to enter into long-term leases with private and other public entities to improve underutilized VA property and develop beneficial uses on medical center grounds. Finally, the bill extends for two years the (1) pilot program that provides noninstitutional alternatives to veterans' nursing home care; and (2) VA's authority to operate a Health Professional Scholarship Program. The VA provides hospital-based home care, adult day health care, homemaker/home health aide services, and community residential care to veterans under its non-institutional long-term program, furnishing these services

solely through contracts with public and private agencies. Under the Health Professional Scholarship Program, the VA may provide scholarship assistance to persons studying to be registered nurses and other health-related professionals in exchange for the student's commitment to work for the VA for two years.

Assuming appropriations of authorized amounts, CBO estimates that enactment will increase discretionary spending by \$89 million in FY 1998 and \$280 million over the FY 1998-2002 period. The bill was introduced by Senator Specter and reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee by voice vote on October 5, 1997. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on November 5, 1997. The House passed legislation to extend certain expiring VA authorities (e.g., homeless veterans programs), H.R. 2206, by voice vote on October 6, 1997.

Although a compromise agreement had not been reached at press time, the bill also may include provisions from previous House-passed bills, such as provisions to (1) restructure authority and responsibility for overseeing equal employment opportunities within the VA to improve and expedite procedures for resolving complaints of sexual harassment and other unlawful employment discrimination (H.R. 1703); (2) address veterans' needs relating to Gulf War illnesses (H.R. 2206); and (3) authorize VA medical construction projects and facility leases (H.R. 2571).

**S. 1139—Small Business Reauthorization Act** reauthorizes the Small Business Administration and the programs of the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act through FY 2000. The bill sets new authorization levels at \$1.4 billion for FYs 1998 and 1999, and \$1.5 billion for FY 2000. The bill reauthorizes, modifies, and strengthens the SBA's financial programs, including the general business loan guarantee program, the Certified Development Company program, the Microloan program, and the Small Business Investment Company program. In addition, the bill reauthorizes the technical assistance and procurement programs of the SBA, including the Women's Business Center program, the Small Business Development Center program, and the Competitive-ness Program. Finally, the bill establishes the HUBZone Program, which provides federal dollars and incentives to businesses that locate in and employ residents from economically-distressed areas, thereby targeting inner cities and rural counties that have low household incomes, high unemployment, and whose communities have suffered from a lack of investment. The bill is considered noncontroversial.

Small Business Administration programs provide over \$13 billion in financial assistance annually to over 100,000 small businesses across the United States. These programs remedy shortfalls in access to credit and capital for small businesses. By providing financial assistance in amounts as small as \$500 to as much as \$1.25 million, the SBA and its private sector partners—bank and non-bank lenders, surety bond insurers, certified development companies, microlenders, and small business investment companies—provide a vital stimulus to the small business sector of the economy. The SBA also provides millions of dollars in disaster assistance to small businesses and homeowners every year. CBO estimates that enactment will result in new discretionary spending of about \$4.4 billion over the FY 1998-2002 period. Of this total, \$570 million is from amounts specifically authorized in the bill for SBA programs—primarily for administrative expenses. The remaining \$3.8 billion is primarily for the subsidy costs of SBA loan programs. CBO estimates that enactment also will result in an increase in direct spending of \$1 million in fiscal year 1998 and \$5 million over the FY 1998-2002 period. The bill was introduced by Senator Bond and reported by the Senate Small Business Committee by voice vote on August 19, 1997. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous

consent on October 31, 1997. The House passed similar legislation, H.R. 2261, by a vote of 397-17 on September 29, 1997.

**H.R. 1377—Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act** creates outreach programs to educate the public about the retirement savings system, and convenes a National Summit on Retirement Savings to explore methods to promote retirement savings. Specifically, the bill directs the Labor Secretary to maintain an outreach program to encourage retirement savings. The bill also requires the White House to convene three national summits on retirement savings in 1998, 2001, and 2005. The bill authorizes \$1 million for FY 1998 and such sums as necessary for FY 1999-2002 for the programs established by the bill. CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 1377 will result in discretionary outlays (i.e., subject to appropriations) of \$6 million over the next five years, and increase revenues by \$500,000 in FY 1998. The bill was passed by the House by voice vote on May 22, 1997. The Senate passed an amended version of the bill by unanimous consent on November 7. Today, the House will consider the technical amendments approved by the Senate.

**H.R. 2920—Amending the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act** amends the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (*P.L. 104-208*), to move the deadline by which entry-exit systems at land-based border entry points must be operational to October 1, 1999. Under the 1996 law, entry-exit checkpoints must be established at all land-based border points of entry, which will monitor persons from Mexico and Canada entering into the U.S., no later than October 1, 1998; although this provision and its deadline also apply to U.S. airports and seaports, H.R. 2920 does not extend the entry-exit system deadline for them. Additionally, the bill stipulates that the land border checkpoints cannot significantly disrupt or impede trade or tourism. The bill arises from concerns expressed by Canadian officials who fear that the new checkpoints will result in substantial and unnecessary delays at border crossings as temporary visitors are inspected each day. They assert that this disruption could adversely affect tourism between the U.S. and Canada and wish to avoid such ramifications. CBO did not complete a cost estimate for the bill. H.R. 2920 was introduced by Mr. Solomon et al., and was not considered by any committee.

**H.Con.Res. 139—Sense of Congress Regarding U.S. Participation in EXPO 2000, in Hannover, Germany** expresses the sense of Congress that in the year 2000, the United States should fully participate in the EXPO 2000 held in Hannover, Germany, and encourage the academic community and the private sector in the U.S. to support this worthwhile undertaking. Germany has invited nations, organizations, and individuals from around the world to participate in a global town hall meeting to be held in Hannover for the purpose of providing a forum for world-wide dialogue on the challenges, goals, and solutions for the sustainable development of mankind in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The resolution highlights the more than 40 million Americans who trace their ancestry to Germany and the close relationship the U.S. enjoys with the people and government of that country. It also calls attention to the fact that as a leading political, intellectual, and economic power, the U.S. has a strong interest in promoting political freedom and human rights, open market economies, and technological development throughout the world. The bill was introduced by Mr. Bereuter *et al.* on July 31, 1997, and the International Relations Committee ordered the resolution reported by voice vote on September 11, 1997.

**H.Res. 245—Supporting a Free and Fair Referendum on Self-Determination for the People of Western Sahara** expresses support for (1) former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III in his mission as personal envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Western Sahara; and (2)

a free and fair referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. The resolution requests the administration to support Mr. Baker in his mission of organizing a referendum. It also encourages the release of civilian political prisoners and prisoners of war held by Morocco and the Polisario Front.

On October 16, 1975, the International Court of Justice declared that no legal ties of territorial sovereignty exist between the Western Sahara and the Kingdom of Morocco. However, in September 1991, a cease-fire accord between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro, also known as the Polisario Front, called for a referendum by the legitimate people of Western Sahara. The referendum, originally scheduled for January 1992, had been repeatedly postponed because of disagreement over voter eligibility. Recently, the United Nations appointed former United States Secretary of State James Baker III as Personal Envoy of the Secretary General for Western Sahara to end the current referendum stalemate. H.Res. 245 was introduced by Mr. Royce et al. and the International Relations Committee passed the resolution by voice vote on October 9.

**H.Con.Res. 156—Condemning Continued Deterioration of Human Rights in Afghanistan** condemns the violations of international humanitarian law by the Taliban coalition in Afghanistan and any other warring factions, the reported cases of stoning, public executions, and street beatings, and the Taliban's targeted discrimination against women and girls. The resolution urges the Taliban and all other parties in Afghanistan to cease providing a safe haven to suspected terrorists or permitting Afghan territory to be used for terrorist training. It affirms the need for peace negotiations and expresses hope that the Afghan parties will agree to a cease-fire. Finally, the resolution urges the president to continue to monitor the human rights situation in Afghanistan and take various actions to produce a durable peace in Afghanistan, promote respect for human rights and end discrimination against women and girls. H.Con.Res. 156 was introduced by Ms. Maloney and passed by the International Relations Committee by voice vote on October 31, 1997.

**H.R. 1805—Auburn Indian Restoration Act** amends the 1994 Auburn Indian Restoration Act to establish restrictions on gaming and nongaming activities on land held in trust for the United Auburn Indian Community in Placer County, California. The bill prohibits any land being taken into trust by the federal government for the community until the tribe enters into a binding compact with the local government of jurisdiction in which the land is located. In addition, the bill (1) prohibits gaming on more than one piece of land in the Placer County; (2) prohibits gaming on any land within two miles from any church, home, or school; (3) grants law enforcement and judicial authority to the state of California over community gaming operations (currently only the federal government has such authority); and (4) prohibits all gaming in the future if the tribe is found to have established gaming which is illegal in the state or outside a compact established with the governor. The bill also stipulates that the compacts must include provisions regarding the location and permissible use of the land to be taken into trust, environmental studies, law enforcement jurisdictional responsibilities, as well as building and design standards for any structures proposed to be built on the land. The bill is considered non-controversial. CBO estimates that the costs associated with taking the lands into trust will be minimal and that enactment of H.R. 1805 will have no other impact on the federal budget. The bill does not affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. The bill was introduced by Mr. Doolittle; the Resources Committee reported the bill by voice vote on September 17, 1997.

**H.R. 2402—Water-Related Technical Corrections Act** makes a number of technical corrections to federal reclamation law to clarify authorities of the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) or existing provisions of law. The bill is considered non-controversial. Specifically, the bill:

- \* reduces the waiting period for obligation of funds provided under the 1978 Reclamation Safety of Dams Act from 60 days to 30 calendar days. The current waiting period calculation method often results in waiting periods of much longer than 60 days before funds can be obligated. In several past instances, Congress has waived the waiting period to proceed with emergency dam safety work;
- \* authorizes the Interior Secretary to enter into contracts, pursuant to the 1911 Warren Act, to allow the use of reclamation project facilities to impound, store, and move nonproject water for domestic, municipal, industrial, and other beneficial purposes;
- \* requires the Interior Secretary to refund overpayments, subject to the availability of appropriations, that were received by the United States as the result of monetary penalties assessed on water districts that failed to submit the required forms under the 1982 Reclamation Reform Act (RRA);
- \* clarifies that the temporary debt relief (pursuant to the 1996 Emergency Drought Relief Act) provided to the City of Corpus Christi, Texas, the Nueces River Authority, and the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority will extend the period of contract repayment;
- \* authorizes the Interior Secretary to participate in the planning, design, and construction of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Water Reclamation and Reuse Project;
- \* clarifies the authority of the Interior Secretary to participate in the planning, design, and construction of the Phoenix Metropolitan Water Reclamation and Reuse Project;
- \* directs the Interior Secretary to allow the use of the Canadian River Project distribution system, a federal reclamation project, to transport water from the Canadian River Conjunctive Use Groundwater Project, a nonfederal water project currently in the design phase, to municipalities that already receive water from the Canadian River Project;
- \* authorizes the Interior Secretary to provide a loan guarantee of up to \$70 million to either the Olivenhain Municipal Water District or to a nongovernmental developer selected by the district to build and finance the Olivenhain Water Storage Project in San Diego County, California; and
- \* authorizes the Interior Secretary to provide up to \$2 million in financial assistance to the Medford and Rogue River Valley Irrigation districts to design and construct fish passage and protective facilities at two dams in Oregon.

A CBO estimate was unavailable at press time. The bill was introduced by Mr. Doolittle and the Resources Committee reported the bill by voice vote on October 1, 1997.

**H.R. 2283—Arches National Park Expansion Act** authorizes the addition of 3,140 acres (mostly Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, along with 32 acres of school trust land owned by the state of Utah) to Arches National Park, located in Grand County, Utah. Specifically, the bill authorizes the secretary to convey specified federal lands to the state of Utah in exchange for state school trust lands, if the state offers the exchange within one year after enactment. Once the exchange is completed, the bill directs the Interior Secretary to transfer jurisdiction of specified BLM lands to the National Park Service. The Arches National Monument was designated by presidential procla-

mation in 1929, enlarged by presidential proclamation in 1938, 1960, and 1969, and established as Arches National Park by Congress in 1971 (*P.L. 92-155*). The park, consisting of 73,379-acres, features giant stone arches, windows, pinnacles, and pedestals that change color constantly as the sun moves across the sky. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill may affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures apply; however, CBO estimates that any such effects will be negligible. The bill was introduced by Mr. Cannon; the Resources Committee reported the bill by voice vote on October 22, 1997.

**S. 669—Acquiring the Plains Railroad Depot at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site** removes the existing prohibition on the purchase of the Plains Railroad Depot, one of the properties that comprise the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains, Georgia (established by Congress in 1987). Under current law, the property may be acquired only by donation. Eliminating the restriction will enable the National Park Service (NPS) to acquire about one-third of an acre of land associated with the depot building (which the agency already owns) through a “friendly condemnation” proceeding. The depot was the site of former President Carter’s campaign headquarters during the 1976 presidential campaign. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on July 11, 1997. CBO estimates that enactment will cost the federal government less than \$20,000, assuming appropriation of the necessary amount. The bill does not affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. The bill was introduced by Senator Coverdell; the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported the bill by voice vote on June 26, 1997.

**H.R. 112—Stanislaus County Land Conveyance** directs the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) administrator to convey the NASA Ames Research Center, Crows Landing Facility to Stanislaus County, California. The bill specifies that (1) the conveyance does not relieve the federal government from environmental cleanup responsibilities, (2) NASA retains the right to use the property for aviation activities, and (3) NASA relinquish its legislative jurisdiction over the property to the State of California. The bill was introduced by Mr. Condit on January 7, 1997, and was not considered by any committee.

**S. 1231—United States Fire Administration Authorization Act** amends the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize appropriations for the Fire Administration of \$29.6 million for fiscal year 1998 and \$30.5 million for fiscal year 1999. The mission of the U.S. Fire Administration is to enhance the nation’s fire prevention and control activities and significantly reduce loss of life from fire, while also reducing property loss and nonfatal injury due to fire. The administration’s main functions involve (1) collecting, analyzing, and disseminating fire incidence and loss data; (2) developing and distributing public fire education materials; (3) developing better hazardous materials response information for first responders; and (4) providing support for research and development for fire safety technologies. The bill was introduced by Senator Frist and was passed by the Senate by unanimous consent on November 4, 1997.

**H.R. 1502** names the federal courthouse located at 301 West Main Street in Benton, Illinois, after James L. Foreman. Judge Foreman was appointed to the federal bench in 1972, after serving as an assistant attorney general for Illinois and Massoc County State’s Attorney. He became Chief Judge in 1978 and Senior District Judge in 1992. He was instrumental in instituting a formal case management system before it was mandated for all federal courts. Judge Foreman has also served on the Judicial Resource Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, and been appointed to sit by designation in cases before the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and in



the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill was introduced by Mr. Poshard on April 30, 1997, and was reported by the Transportation Committee by voice vote on July 23.

**H.R. 2626—Clarifying the Pilot Records Improvement Act** allows an airline to hire and train pilots before receiving their background information from previous employers. Current law requires air carriers to receive background information for new hires within 30 days. Unfortunately, the FAA and some airlines have not been able to transfer the information within the required time. While the bill allows airlines to hire and train pilots, pilots can not fly passengers until their records have been received and evaluated. Also, the bill allows pilots hired by small air charter companies to fly passengers before receiving background records, but not for more than 90 days. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill was introduced by Mr. Duncan on October 7, 1997, and was reported by the Transportation Committee by voice vote on October 29.

**H.R. 2834** permits the city of Cleveland, Ohio, to convey certain land that was conveyed to the city by the U.S. government. The bill was introduced by Mr. LaTourette on November 6, 1997, but was not acted on by the Transportation Committee.

**H.R. 849—Prohibiting Illegal Aliens from Receiving Relocation Assistance** amends the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (URA) of 1970 to prohibit the payment of displacement compensation to illegal aliens. The bill was introduced by Mr. Packard on February 26, 1997, and was passed by the House by a vote of 399-0 on July 9, 1997. Last night, the Senate passed its version of H.R. 849. Today, the House will consider minor Senate amendments.

**H.R. 2476—Foreign Airlines Family Assistance Act** requires the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and individual foreign air carriers to address the needs of families of passengers involved in aircraft accidents involving foreign air carriers. Last year, Congress passed a bill to support the families of victims of air carrier accidents. This bill extends the law to require foreign airlines serving the U.S. to submit disaster assistance plans like those required of U.S. air carriers. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill was introduced by Mr. Underwood on September 15, 1997, and was reported by the Transportation Committee by voice vote on October 29.



## **H.R. 2621—Reciprocal Trade Agreement Authorities Act**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider H.R. 2621 after it completes consideration of the scheduled suspensions. Last Thursday, the Rules Committee granted a closed rule providing for two hours of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Ways & Means Committee. The rule makes in order a committee amendment in the nature of a substitute as base text, and waives all points of order against the bill as amended. Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

**Summary:** H.R. 2621 renews the president’s authority to negotiate and implement international trade agreements through an expedited procedure called “fast-track.” The provisions of fast-track authority requires Congress, after extensive consultation with the president—at all stages of negotiation—to (1) consider bills to implement trade agreements within a limited and fixed time frame; and (2) vote on these implementing bills “up or down,” without amending them. H.R. 2621 extends the president’s fast track authority until October 1, 2001. CBO estimates that enactment will result in direct spending of \$750 million and discretionary spending of \$12 million, between FYs 1998-2002. The bill affects revenues and direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures apply. H.R. 2621 was introduced by Mr. Archer and Mr. Crane, and was reported by the Ways & Means Committee by a vote of 24-14 on October 8, 1997.

**Views:** The Republican Leadership supports passage of the bill. The Clinton Administration also supports passage of the bill.

**Amendments:** The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute includes the following manager’s amendment:

— *Manager’s Amendment* —

The manager’s amendment (1) establishes a “Special 301” procedure for identifying countries that deny market access for U.S. agricultural products; (2) makes technical and confirming amendments to the bill; and (3) strikes revenue offset language in the bill regarding the repeal of the special rule which allows taxpayers who own rental vacation property to deduct up to the first 15 days’ worth of income derived from the property from their federal taxes. The manager’s amendment replaces this language with a provision to clarify the time when an employer may deduct accrued severance pay. Under current law, any deferred compensation—except for severance pay—that a company gives to an employee within two and one-half months after the end of the taxable year (that is, on or around mid-March) is counted as actual taxable compensation for the employer in that tax year. This provision is based on a 1996 tax court ruling in *Schmidt Baking Co., Inc.*, where the court ruled that compensation received in full within an abbreviated period for such long-term items as vacation or severance packages must be considered taxable income for the year in which it is received.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #31, Pt. IV, November 6, 1997.



## **H.R. 2267—Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Appropriations Act (Conference Report)**

**Floor Situation:** The House is expected to consider the conference report to H.R. 2267 sometime today. At press time, the conference report had not been filed. Additional information will be published in an issue of the *Legislative Digest* if it becomes available.



## H.R. 2607—District of Columbia Appropriations Act (Conference Report)

**Floor Situation:** The House is expected to consider the conference report to H.R. 2607 sometime today. At press time, the conference report had not been filed. Additional information will be published in an issue of the *Legislative Digest* if it becomes available.



## H.R. 2159—Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (Conference Report)

**Floor Situation:** The House is expected to consider the conference report to H.R. 2159 sometime today. At press time, the conference report had not been filed. Additional information will be published in an issue of the *Legislative Digest* if it becomes available.



PLEASE NOTE: UNDER THE EXPEDITED PROCEDURES RULE, MEASURES MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE FLOOR UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES AN HOUR AFTER BEING ANNOUNCED, AND CONFERENCE REPORTS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT ANY TIME.

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